

**Original citation:**

Cooley, Alison. (2018) Latin inscriptions in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. Zeitschrift fuer Epigraphik und Papyrologie, 205. pp. 253-267.

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ALISON COOLEY

LATIN INSCRIPTIONS IN THE ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM, OXFORD

aus: Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik 205 (2018) 253–267

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## LATIN INSCRIPTIONS IN THE ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM, OXFORD

The Ashmolean Latin Inscriptions Project (AshLI) has been funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council, UK, from 2013 to 2017.<sup>1</sup> Its aim has been to produce a comprehensive new critical edition of all Latin inscriptions in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, from antiquity to the eleventh century.<sup>2</sup> In the course of our work, we have identified what appear to be some unpublished inscriptions, four of which are of especial interest,<sup>3</sup> whilst the others are rather fragmentary. We have also been able to suggest new readings of some other already published inscriptions, on the basis of autopsy, especially via the use of Reflectance Transformation Imaging.<sup>4</sup> In other cases, we have happily rediscovered some inscriptions believed to have become lost.

### Unpublished inscriptions

#### *AshLI 167: Funerary altar, from Rome*<sup>5</sup>

This marble funerary altar [Figs 1–4] (h., 66 cm.; w., 48 cm.; d., 28 cm.) is as good as unpublished, since it can be seen together with a transcription of its inscription only on a drawing of 1785 by Samuel Lewis,<sup>6</sup> published in 1797 and which has been reproduced in a recent journal article on garden history but has not been further noted by ancient historians or epigraphers.<sup>7</sup> Letter heights: 4–1.8 cm. On the right side is a relief depicting a set of weighing scales with a bust serving as a counter-weight. On the left side is a relief of a meat cleaver. The top of the altar includes a cornice, with a frieze of rosettes with garlands hanging between them below this. The base is moulded, with a leaf cornice. On the base section, to both right and left sides, there is a section in the middle that has been cut away with a small circular hole (perhaps related to the altar's display in the post-classical period). In alignment with these small holes are further similar small holes inserted into the moulding around the relief, in the centre top. The top surface is smooth, whilst the rear is roughly finished.

*diis manibus / Istimennia P(ubli) f(ilia) / Primigenia / sibi et / P(ublio) Murrio Primo / coniugi  
suo et / libertis libertabusq(ue) / posterisque eorum*

‘To the spirits of the dead. Istimennia Primigenia, daughter of Publius, for herself and for Publius Murrius Primus, her husband, and for their freedmen and freedwomen, and for their descendants.’

This altar was brought to England in the 1700s. By 1785 it supported a marble statue near the entrance to ‘Pope’s Grotto’, in Twickenham (Middlesex), a picturesque feature built beneath the riverside villa of poet Alexander Pope (1688–1744), which was begun in the 1720s and continued to be modified and enhanced further until Pope’s death in 1744. It seems that the altar and statue were not a feature of Pope’s own design,

<sup>1</sup> I would like to thank the other members of the AshLI team for their contribution to the project: Dr Susan Walker, Dr Paul Roberts, Dr Charles Crowther, Dr Jane Masségli, Dr Hannah Cornwell, Dr Abigail Baker; members of the Ashmolean Museum Antiquities Department: Dr Helen Hovey, Ilaria Perzia. For feedback on this article, I am indebted to Prof. Werner Eck and Dr Philomen Probert.

<sup>2</sup> <http://latininscriptions.ashmus.ox.ac.uk>.

<sup>3</sup> AshLI 167, 176, 151; the fourth – a large unpublished block from Ephesos – will be published in the proceedings of the 2016 North American Congress of Greek and Latin Epigraphy.

<sup>4</sup> RTI was carried out by Benjamin Altshuler.

<sup>5</sup> Ashmolean Museum Department of Antiquities MS Accession Register 2008.47.

<sup>6</sup> The drawing by Lewis misreads the following parts of the text: IS<sup>o</sup>TIMENNIA (line 1), R MVRRIO PRIMO (line 5); CONIVGO SVO.

<sup>7</sup> E. Ironside, *The History and Antiquities of Twickenham* (London 1797) pl. VII, transcription on p.81; A. Beckles Willson, Alexander Pope’s Grotto in Twickenham, *Garden History* 26.1 (1998) pp.31–59, at Fig.13, n.36.



Fig. 1. AshLI 167 = Ashmolean AN 2008.47: front side  
[photograph courtesy of the Ashmolean Museum]

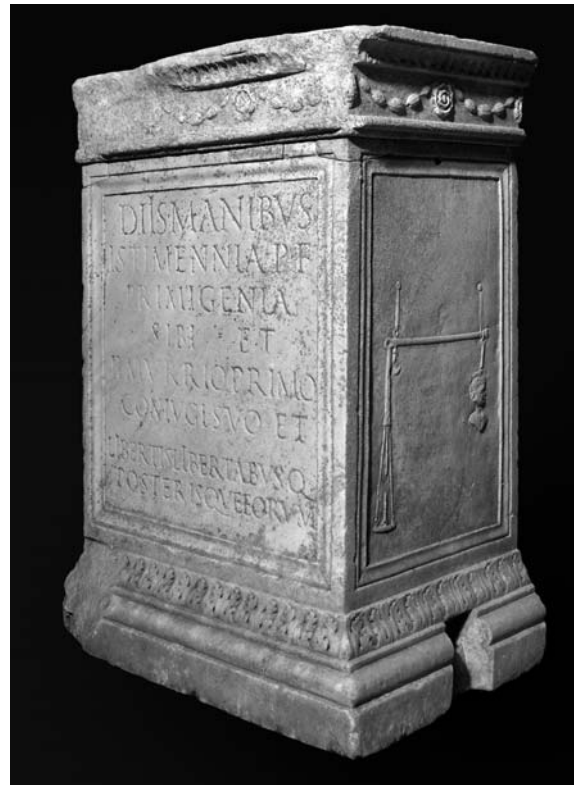


Fig. 2. AshLI 167 = Ashmolean AN 2008.47: front and right  
sides [photograph courtesy of the Ashmolean Museum]



Fig. 3. AshLI 167 = Ashmolean AN 2008.47: right side  
[photograph courtesy of the Ashmolean Museum]



Fig. 4. AshLI 167 = Ashmolean AN 2008.47: left side  
[photograph courtesy of the Ashmolean Museum]

but were added after the residence was acquired by Sir William Stanhope in 1745. He created a new feature, which became known as ‘Stanhope’s Cave’, and also added other classical antiquities to the grotto’s entrance.<sup>8</sup> It is not known at what point the altar then left the site, but it is likely that it was removed by Baroness Howe who from 1807 attempted to deter visitors from coming to the grotto by removing its decorations and altering the garden. According to the Ashmolean Accession Register, the altar was accepted by HM government in lieu of tax on the estate of Sir Howard Colvin (1919–2007), architectural historian and Fellow of St John’s College.<sup>9</sup> It is currently on display in The David and Margita Wheeler Gallery.

The reliefs on either side of this funerary altar suggest that it is an example of funerary commemoration that alludes to the deceased’s occupation, even though this is not mentioned explicitly in the epitaph itself. Both the meat cleaver on the left and the set of scales on the right suggest a role as butcher.<sup>10</sup> Such occupational allusions are typical of funerary altars and reliefs of the mid-first to second centuries AD.

*AshLI 176: Votive dedication, from Basel*<sup>11</sup>

The lower left-hand corner is preserved of a damaged bronze votive plaque [Fig.5] (h., 9.5+ cm.; w., 6.3+ cm.; d., 0.5 cm.) showing in relief an image of Jupiter enthroned. He is depicted partially bare-chested, holding a globe in his left hand and with his right arm outstretched. An eagle with open wings stands next to him in the lower left corner. There is part of a hole for attachment at the bottom of the plaque. Letters height: 0.7 cm. It was probably originally dedicated by an individual, and fixed up on the wall of a sanctuary.

*pro salut[e] ---]*

‘On behalf of the welfare ...’

The plaque was purchased on 1<sup>st</sup> October 1995 with funds from the Bomford Trust at auction from Charles Ede, Ltd.<sup>12</sup> Formerly part of the Hess collection, it is reported to have been found near Basel in Switzerland. It is currently on display in the Rome Gallery.

*AshLI 151: A Slave’s Epitaph*<sup>13</sup>

This epitaph [Fig.6] is inscribed upon a marble plaque (h., 28 cm.; w., 35.6 cm.; d., 3 cm.). The rear is smoothed. Letter heights: 2.6–1.8 cm.

*d(is) m(anibus) / Stlogae / vixit ann(is) XIX / diebus LV / L(ucius) Calpurnius Fortunatus / verna merenti / nutritus / Ianuari et Heliadis*

‘To the spirits of the dead. To Stloga (who) lived 19 years, 55 days. Lucius Calpurnius Fortunatus to his well-deserving household-slave, foster-child of Ianuarius and of Helias.’

No provenance is recorded for this funerary inscription, which came into the Ashmolean collection in 1960. It was purchased 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1960 with four other inscriptions<sup>14</sup> for 12 pounds and 10 shillings from Roger Warner of Burford, a dealer in antiquities who had acquired it from the collection of Lord St Vincent, of Sudbury Hall.

<sup>8</sup> Beckles Willson (n.7).

<sup>9</sup> W. Whyte, Colvin, Sir Howard Montagu (1919–2007), *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford 2004).

<sup>10</sup> Compare G. Zimmer, *Römische Berufsdarstellungen* (Berlin 1982) pp.93–106 nos 1–17, especially no.2 and no.4 which include both cleaver and scales.

<sup>11</sup> Ashmolean Museum Department of Antiquities MS Accession Register 1995.91.

<sup>12</sup> Charles Ede, Catalogue 160: Antiquities July 1995 no.1.

<sup>13</sup> Ashmolean Museum Department of Antiquities MS Accession Register 1960.762.

<sup>14</sup> Ashmolean Museum Department of Antiquities MS Accession Register 1960.758–761.



Fig. 5. AshLI 176 = Ashmolean AN 1995.91 [photograph AshLI]

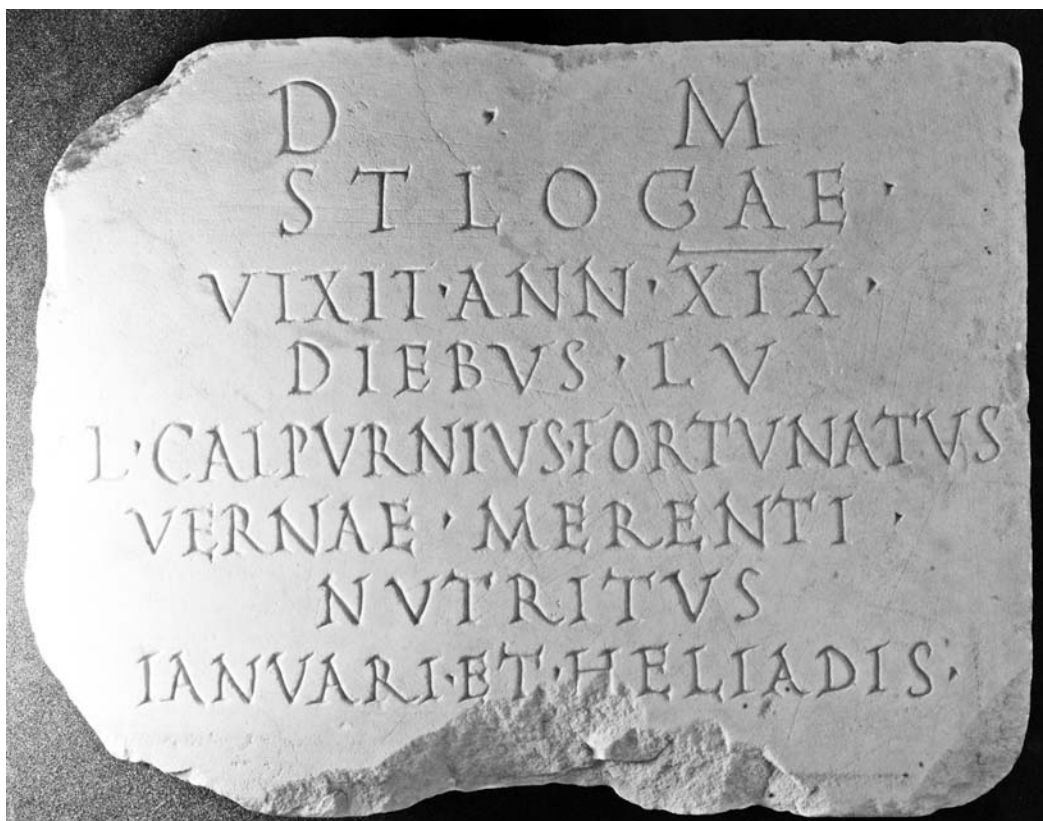


Fig. 6. AshLI 151 = Ashmolean AN 1960.762 [photograph AshLI]

This inscription appears to be unpublished. The name of the deceased household slave is unexpected: no parallel is known from the city of Rome for a slave with the name Stloga,<sup>15</sup> which is otherwise usually associated with the consul of AD 141, M. Peducaeus Stloga Priscinus.<sup>16</sup>

*AshLI 146: Fragmentary Epitaph, from Rome*<sup>17</sup>

This inscription [Fig.7] consists of a small white marble *columbarium* plaque (h., 8 cm.; w., 14.9 cm.; d., 2.8 cm.), imitating a *tabula ansata*. The rear surface is smoothly finished, whilst the top and bottom edges are roughly cut. There appears to be a vertical stroke in front of the first preserved letter. Letter heights: 1.6–1.1 cm.

According to the Ashmolean Museum Accession Register, this inscription is recorded as originating from the ‘palace of the Caesars’ (i.e. the imperial residences on the Palatine), in Rome. This is an odd provenance for an epitaph from a *columbarium*, and suggests that, if this provenance is correct, the inscription was found in a reused context. It was given to the museum by Miss Margaret F. Irvine, but was formerly the property of Mrs Alice Marcon (née Dryden: 1866–1956), a historian who lived in Oxford for over forty years. She, in turn had inherited the inscription from her father, Sir Henry Dryden (1818–1899) of Canons Ashby in Northamptonshire, known as ‘The Antiquary’, who had acquired it earlier in Rome.<sup>18</sup>

[---]a (mulieris) l(iberta) Secunda / [---] Felicis / [---]bae

‘[---]a Secunda, freedwoman of a woman [---] of Felix [---]ba’

The first line records a woman’s name in the nominative case, presumably denoting the deceased. The *columbarium* context and use of white marble suggest a date during the first or early second century AD.<sup>19</sup>

*AshLI 152: Fragmentary Epitaph*<sup>20</sup>

This epitaph [Fig.8] is inscribed upon a small marble plaque (h., 11.9 cm.; w., 15.1 cm.; d., 2.9 cm.), broken off on all sides, and then smoothed; its rear surface has also been smoothed. Letter heights: 1.8–1.1 cm. There are traces of a possible letter B in front of FRATER in line 2.

- - - - - / [---] v(ixit) a(nnos) XVI / [---]+ frater / [?v(ixit) a(nnos)?] XIII (vac.) / [frat?]er  
eoru(m) v(ixit) a(nnos) XIX / [---] Iulia Thallusa / [---] permi]ssu Cn. Domiti Lem/[ - - - - - ?]

‘[---] lived for sixteen(?) years [---]; [---] brother (?lived for) thirteen (years?); their brother(?) who lived for nineteen years; [---] Iulia Thallusa [---] by permission(?) of Gnaeus Domitius Lem[?]’

No provenance is recorded for this fragment. According to the Accession Register, it was given to the Ashmolean Museum by Sir John Beazley, Lincoln Professor of Classical Archaeology at the University of Oxford.

The fragmentary nature of this epitaph makes its text difficult to reconstruct, but it deals with the burial of three individuals. Although the letters LEM could represent the voting-tribe Lem(onia), it would be odd for an individual’s voting-tribe to be listed but not his filiation, and so it seems better here to deduce that LEM is the start of a *cognomen*, such as Lemnus (*AE* 1969/70 no.385), Lemnius (*CIL* VI 8636) or Lemnaeus (*CIL* II 3597, 5970). Note especially that there is a L(ucius) Domitius Lemnus at Rome (*CIL* VI 8499) and a C. Domitius Lemnus at Volaterrae (*CIL* XI 1753). If the restoration of *permissu* is correct, then there is some legal formula here about permission to bury these individuals in a particular tomb-plot.

<sup>15</sup> H. Solin, *Die stadtrömischen Sklavennamen* (Stuttgart 1996).

<sup>16</sup> H. Solin, and O. Salomies, *Repertorium nominum gentilium et cognominum Latinorum* (Hildesheim 1994) p.408.

<sup>17</sup> Ashmolean Museum Department of Antiquities MS Accession Register 1956.239.

<sup>18</sup> B. Dix, Dryden, Sir Henry Edward Leigh, fourth baronet and seventh baronet (1818–1899), *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford 2004).

<sup>19</sup> J. Bodel, From Columbaria to Catacombs: Communities of the Dead in Pagan and Christian Rome, in *Commemorating the Dead: Texts and Artifacts in Context*, eds L. Brink, O.P. and D. Green (Berlin and New York 2008) pp.177–242.

<sup>20</sup> Ashmolean Museum Department of Antiquities MS Accession Register 1966.660.





Fig. 7. AshLI 146 = Ashmolean AN 1956.239 [photograph AshLI]

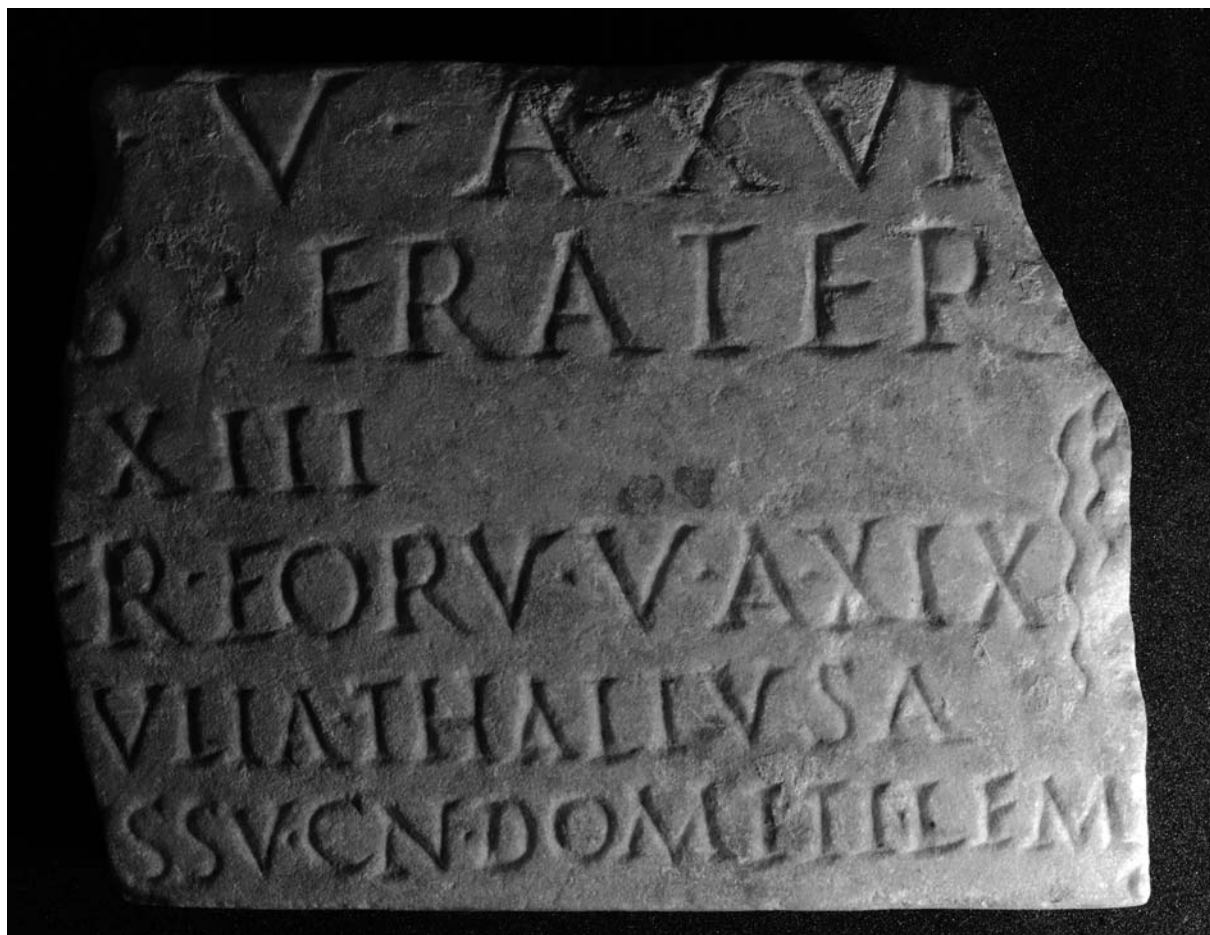


Fig. 8. AshLI 152 = Ashmolean AN 1966.660 [photograph AshLI]

*AshLI 156: Fragmentary Epitaph*<sup>21</sup>

A fragmentary reused marble slab [Fig.9] (h., 27 cm.; w., 21 cm.; d., 7.2 cm.). Letter heights: 4.0–3.8 cm.

[d(is) ] m(anibus) / [---]+ello / [---]ulina / [---? m]ater / [---? p]osuit

‘To the spirits of the dead. To [---]ellus. His mother [---]ulina set this up.’

It is unclear how much text is lost from the left-hand side of the inscription. There is a small trace of the letter in front of ELLO, suggesting a vertical stroke here, which would be consistent with restoring a name such as *Gemellus*, *Marcellus*, *Metellus*, or *Vitellus*. There is also a range of options for restoring the mother’s name, including [Pa]ulina, [I]ulina, [Proc]ulina, [Tusc]ulina, and [A]ulina.

No provenance is recorded; according to the Accession Register, it was presented to the museum by Colin Kraay, Keeper of the Heberden Coin Room.

## New readings of published inscriptions

*AshLI 12: Foundation of a Shrine of Cnidian Venus, from Rome*

This inscription from the Arundel collection was published as *CIL* VI 2273 [Fig.10].<sup>22</sup> It is an unadorned squarish slab of white marble (h., 20 cm.; w., 24.3 cm.; d., 4 cm.). It has been put on display in the Rome Gallery as part of our project. The text is poorly laid out, with words overlapping lines (1/2, 3/4, 4/5). The letters are irregularly cut, with letter heights 2.4–2.1 cm. Several mistakes have been made by the stone-cutter, and interpuncts occur inconsistently. In line 3, *Chendies* appears on the stone in place of *Cnidies*; in line 5, *cost•itui* is engraved in place of *constitui*. This edition suggests that the final line should read *item et donavi*, where the stone has *it en•te*, with *iten* in place of *item*,<sup>23</sup> and *te* inscribed in error for *et*. This presents a simpler solution than the rather complicated emendation suggested in *CIL*, where Mommsen advocated restoring the word *enthecum* in line 6. The style of lettering is described by *CIL* as *litteris aevi recentioris*, but the historical context relating to the establishment of a cult of Venus by Fedimus, recalled by the *spira Phaediniana* in AshLI 11,<sup>24</sup> suggests that it cannot be later than the late second/early third century AD.

*Fedimus conditlor sacrari Veneris / C<sup>n</sup>i<sup>d</sup>ies cum porticum (sic) et cocina<sup>5</sup>torium (sic)*  
*co<n>st itui / ite<sup>m</sup>te<sup>1</sup> donavi*

‘I, Fedimus, founder of the shrine of Cnidian Venus, established it with a portico and kitchen, and in addition I also donated it.’

Fedimus was probably a freedman,<sup>25</sup> but calling himself a *conditor* – a word more usually associated with emperors or high-ranking individuals (compare *CIL* VI 1198, 1397, 1490, 1662, 1678, 1744a) – shows a sense of self-worth. The language of this inscription is marked by a blurring of Greek and Latin: the Greek name *Phaedimos* is given in a Latin version as *Fedimus*, and the epithet of Venus (*Cnidies*) is inflected in Latin script in its Greek form.<sup>26</sup> The word *sacrarium* suggests a small-scale building, where the association of worshippers could meet,<sup>27</sup> but it included a kitchen and portico. Other kitchens are epigraphically

<sup>21</sup> Ashmolean Museum Department of Antiquities MS Accession Register 1992.23.

<sup>22</sup> Ashmolean AN C3-13. H. Prideaux, *Marmora Oxoniensia ex Arundellianis, Seldenianis aliisque conflata* (Oxford 1676) p.148, no.114; M. Maithaire, *Marmorum, Arundellianorum, Seldenianorum, Aliorumque Academiae Oxoniensi Donatorum* (London 1732, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn) p.34, no.43 + p.560; R. Chandler, *Marmora Oxoniensia* (Oxford 1763) p.131, no.13; Epigraphic Database Roma no.158749 [accessed 31/07/17].

<sup>23</sup> Compare *CIL* V 8143 for *iten* = *item*.

<sup>24</sup> *CIL* VI 76, with analysis by C. Iorizzo, *Venus Cnidia a Roma* (Tivoli 2009) pp.20–22, 28–34 [= *AE* 2009 no.159].

<sup>25</sup> H. Solin, *Die griechischen Personennamen in Rom. Ein Namenbuch* (2<sup>nd</sup> edn) (Berlin 2003) vol.I, p.570.

<sup>26</sup> Compare J. N. Adams, *Bilingualism and the Latin Language* (Cambridge 2003) p.480.

<sup>27</sup> Iorizzo (above, n.24) pp.25–26.



Fig. 9. AshLI 156 = Ashmolean AN 1992.23 [photograph AshLI]



Fig. 10. AshLI 12 = Ashmolean AN C3-13 = *CIL* VI 2273 [photograph CSAD]

known in shrines of the Bona Dea at Ostia,<sup>28</sup> Diana Tifatina at Capua,<sup>29</sup> Hercules at Tibur,<sup>30</sup> and Venus at Casinum;<sup>31</sup> another has been identified archaeologically in the Temple of Isis at Pompeii.<sup>32</sup> Such kitchens may have been used for preparing meals for consumption by cult officials and worshippers.<sup>33</sup> The use of the word *cocinatorium* is unusual in place of *culina*.

*AshLI 16: Verse Epitaph for Marsidia Agathemeris and Marsidia Stabilis, from Rome*<sup>34</sup>

Belonging to the Arundel collection,<sup>35</sup> this metric inscription has long been known, but its fragmentary and worn state has left its text in doubt [Fig.11]. By using Reflectance Transformation Imaging, we have set out to evaluate its different readings, and offer a new edition, translation, and interpretation of the family relationships described in the epitaph.

The inscription consists of an unadorned grey-white marble slab (h., 26.8 cm.; w., 25 cm.; d., 3.3 cm.). It consists of two contiguous pieces, with a further section missing to the right, where the stone has broken. Its left side is intact. It has suffered some surface damage; the letters are increasingly worn towards the right and become hard to read, but RTI has helped to evaluate alternative readings. In line 9 the dative *senectúti* should be read in place of *senectútis* favoured by many previous editions.<sup>36</sup> This does not alter the general meaning, however. More importantly, in line 13 the word *robur* is now perhaps more plausible as a reading than *ponere[r una meis]* given by Buecheler in *CLE* and *ponere[r hicce meis]* proposed by Mommsen in *CIL*. This would validate the text given by the earliest viewers of the inscription: Giovanni Zarattino Castellini (1570–1641), whose copy of the text which he made at the Palazzo of Cardinal Crescenzi, near the Pantheon in Rome, at some time after 1611, presented the reading *quippe superstitibus robori...* and Reinesius, who, following the earlier edition by Sirmond (1559–1651), also preserved the same text.<sup>37</sup> Even with RTI, though, the reading is not beyond doubt.

The text is carefully laid out, with a larger heading in the centre at the top identifying the two deceased women and probably dedicator, with each line indented further than the previous, and the letters gradually decreasing from line to line. This is followed by two columns of verse lament, but only a tiny trace remains of the second of these. Letter heights: 1.7–0.6 cm.

*Marsidia Agath[emeris filia vix(it) ann(os) - c.3 -] / Marsidia Stab[ilis mater vix(it) ann(os)  
LXX] / Euhemeris fi[lia ---] || si pietáte aliquem redimi fatále fuisset <sup>f</sup> Marsidia Stabilis pri-  
ma redempta forem / quam vis máter eram nátárum próle decóra / nam gemínas habui karus  
eratque nepos / septuáginta super me<sup>n</sup>ses nátálibus égi / summa senectúti praemia passa  
cremor <sup>o</sup> quod si non cinerés Agathémeris immátura / auxisset nostrós máter et ipsa foret /  
tunc ego nóbiliór cúntárum sorte [fuissem] / quippe superstitibus robor[e laeta forem] || si  
p[---] <sup>5</sup> [- - - - -] / q[---]*

<sup>28</sup> AE 1973 no.127.

<sup>29</sup> CIL I<sup>2</sup> 680.

<sup>30</sup> CIL XIV 3543.

<sup>31</sup> AE 1975 no.197.

<sup>32</sup> S. De Caro, *Alla ricerca di Iside. Analisi, studi e restauri dell'Iseo pompeiano nel Museo di Napoli* (Rome 1992) p.11.

<sup>33</sup> Compare AE 1980 no.216.

<sup>34</sup> Ashmolean AN C3-17; CIL VI 22251; F. Buecheler, *Carmina Latina Epigraphica* II.2 (Leipzig 1897) no.1127 (verses only).

<sup>35</sup> Prideaux (above, n.22) p.143, no.83; Maittaire (above, n.22) p.44, no.136; Chandler (above, n.22) p.131, no.17.

<sup>36</sup> For example, Castellini in [G. Minasi] 'Archeologia', *La civiltà cattolica*, ser. 15 vol. 7 (1893) 208–228 at p.215; Prideaux and Maittaire (above, n.22); *CLE*; *CIL*.

<sup>37</sup> Castellini (above, n.36) p.215; T. Reinesius, *Nova reperta inscriptionum antiquarum* (Leipzig and Frankfurt 1682) p.709, no. 36.



Fig. 11. AshLI 16 = Ashmolean AN C3-17 = *CIL* VI 22251 [photograph CSAD]

‘Marsidia Agathemeris, [daughter, lived for ? years.] Marsidia Stab[ilis, mother, lived for 70 years.] Euhemeris, daughter [? set this up].

If it had been destined for someone to be saved because of affection, I, Marsidia Stabilis, would be the first to be saved, even though I was a mother graced with offspring of daughters, for I had twins and a grandson was dear; I lived through some months in addition to my seventy birthdays, having experienced the highest rewards from old age I am being cremated; but had not Agathemeris in untimely fashion increased our ashes, she herself would also be a mother; in that case I would have been more illustrious than all women in my fate, inasmuch as [I would be fortunate?] in those surviving me as a source of strength.

If ...’

It is usually assumed that Euhemeris is daughter of Agathemeris. Given the reference to Stabilis' pride in her twin daughters (line 3), however, this epitaph may rather have been set up by the surviving twin. Euhemeris and Agathemeris would thus be the twin daughters of Stabilis, with Euhemeris also having a son (unnamed). On this interpretation, the heading reveals that the epitaph was set up by Euhemeris, one of the twin daughters of Marsidia Stabilis, commemorating her mother and twin sister Agathemeris. It is possible that missing from the heading is the longer phrase *Euhemeris fil[ia sororque fecit]*. From the inscribed lament, we discover that Agathemeris was the first to die, followed by her mother, which accounts for the prominence given to Agathemeris in the first line. Following the heading, we find a lament in elegiac couplets, written in the voice of the deceased mother, Marsidia Stabilis. The choice of elegiac meter was appropriate to the tone of lament set in this epitaph, whilst the inscription's status as a verse composition is made clear through its format, with the indenting of the pentameter verses and marking of long vowels with accents. In addition to the use of meter, the choice of vocabulary has poetic echoes (e.g., *proles*). She declares her pride in her family, but laments the premature death of her daughter Agathemeris, who was perhaps pregnant at the time. The theme of untimely death is common in Latin epitaphs, and is all the more striking here because it is perhaps rather unexpected to find it in an epitaph for a seventy-year old. We may speculate whether the matching verses on the other side of the stone (now lost) may have been words attributed to Agathemeris.

*AshLI 144: Epitaph of Macrinus Maximinus*<sup>38</sup>

This funerary stele has been published only rather sketchily by Michaelis and Eugenie Strong,<sup>39</sup> and has not appeared in any epigraphic corpus, but is of great interest for its relevance to studies of Roman attitudes to childhood [Figs 12–13]. The stele is of white marble (h., 41.5 cm.; w., 37.5 cm.; d., 5.5 cm.), with a relief picture within a recessed frame, with inscription below. The rear is smoothed. The relief shows a horseman in a short tunic, in the act of just having speared a wild animal. It is striking that the huntsman is not looking towards the animal being hunted, but is looking out towards the viewer; this allows the relief to emphasise his chubby features which, along with the pony-like features of the horse, both draw attention to the huntsman's surprisingly young age. As part of our project, the inscription can now be seen on display in the Rome Gallery.

The inscription is carved at the bottom of the stele. Letter heights: 2.0–0.9 cm. The carving of the text lacks accuracy: at the end of line 2, the word FILI[O] appears as EIII[O], but the reading is certain from context; in line 3, the word DVLCISSIMO appears as DVLCLSSIMO. Line 4 presents some difficulties, with no obvious parallel for what may be a name or ethnic, Insiru[-]. The word *castrorum* is abbreviated on the stone as KK.

*d(is) m(anibus) / Macrinio Maximino* <sup>f</sup>*il*<sup>i</sup><sup>o</sup> / *dulcissimo qui vixit an(no) I m(ensibus) [-] /*  
*Macrinus Maximinus Insiru[-]* <sup>p</sup>*re*<sup>f</sup><sup>e</sup><sup>c</sup><sup>t</sup>*us (castrorum) fecit*

‘To the departed spirits. To Macrinus Maximinus, sweetest son, who lived for one year and [?] months. Macrinus Maximinus Insiru[-], prefect of the camp, set this up.’

The stele was part of the art collection of Sir Frederick Cook (who died in 1920) in Doughty House, 142 Richmond Hill, Richmond, Surrey.<sup>40</sup> He had inherited the vast collection from his father, Sir Francis Cook on his death in 1901, who had been merchant and art collector.<sup>41</sup> A gallery was created in Doughty House in around 1880 for Sir Francis' collection of antiquities and paintings, and it was extended by Sir Frederick

<sup>38</sup> Ashmolean AN 1947.285.

<sup>39</sup> A. Michaelis, *Ancient Marbles in Great Britain* (translated by C. A. M. Fennell, Cambridge 1882) p.643, no.81; E. Strong, *Antiques in the collection of Sir Frederick Cook, Bart., at Doughty House, Richmond, Journal of Hellenic Studies* 28 (1908) p.41, no.66, with pl.23.

<sup>40</sup> Michaelis (above, n.39) p.643, no.81.

<sup>41</sup> C. Welch, (revised H. Davies), Cook, Sir Francis, first baronet (1817–1901), *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford 2004).



Fig. 12. AshLI 144 = Ashmolean AN 1947.285 [photograph AshLI]



Fig. 13. AshLI 144, close-up of inscription [photograph AshLI]



in 1915.<sup>42</sup> Although the stele reportedly originates from Sicily according to Michaelis, he does not give any reason for this assertion and the character of the relief and inscription does not offer any particular support for this view. It was purchased by the Ashmolean in 1947, along with other objects from Cook's collection.<sup>43</sup>

This is an example of a child's tombstone where he is being represented as behaving far beyond his actual years, in a prospective image, intended to highlight the tragic premature death and to lament that he did not reach his potential.<sup>44</sup> As described above, the depiction of the toddler on the relief is designed to draw attention to his tender years, as he looks out directly towards the viewer, allowing us to see clearly his babyish features, and he is riding something that resembles a child's pony rather than a full-scale horse. The unrealistic scenario depicted, of the toddler having just speared a wild boar whilst out hunting, is intended to depict the qualities of bravery and hunting skill which the young boy was never destined to be able to realise in real life. The closest iconographic parallels for the heroic figure on horseback appear to come from the Black Sea region,<sup>45</sup> where several funerary stelai from the second and third centuries AD use the motif of the young rider to heroise the deceased, sometimes explicitly, as νέος ἥρως.<sup>46</sup> In spirit these seem close to our example, but this stele does remain unparalleled in the extreme youth of the rider. This is brought out by a stele from Rome, now in Palermo Museum, where the epitaph of two-year old Sindrilius is accompanied by the motif of a horseman and wild boar, but the relief actually depicts him being carried along in the arms of an older rider.<sup>47</sup>

*AshLI 150: Epitaph of Vibia Cornelia, Puteoli*<sup>48</sup>

This epitaph was reported found in a tomb near Puteoli in 1844 in the 'Campana' district, with two other inscriptions,<sup>49</sup> and was published twice by Mommsen<sup>50</sup> [Fig.14]. It became part of the Ashmolean's collection in 1960, having been purchased on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1960 together with four other Latin inscriptions for 12 pounds and 10 shillings from antiquities dealer Roger Warner, of Burford, who had acquired them from the collection of Lord St Vincent, Sudbury Hall, Derbyshire. Since its location in the Ashmolean has been unknown up until now, the digital edition by Camodeca, which has undoubtedly improved upon the previous editions, is still necessarily derived from accounts of it in the nineteenth century,<sup>51</sup> whereas by using Reflectance Transformation Imaging, this edition can now suggest a complete interpretation of its rather worn text. A plain plaque of white marble (h., 27 cm.; w., 33 cm.; d., 2.6 cm.), its rear face and sides are finished off in a rudimentary fashion. Letter heights: 2.5–1.8 cm. In line 2 VIRIAE as read by Avellino and Mommsen now appears as VIBIAE via Reflectance Transformation Imaging. In line 3, the

<sup>42</sup> Historic England (1999) National Heritage List for England, 'Doughty House, List entry Number: 1249955' <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1249955> [accessed 10/06/16].

<sup>43</sup> Ashmolean Museum Department of Antiquities MS Accession Register 1947.285; *Ashmolean Museum Report* (1947) p.21.

<sup>44</sup> On prospective images on boys' funerary monuments, see J. Mander, *Portraits of Children on Roman Funerary Monuments* (Cambridge 2013) pp.59–60.

<sup>45</sup> S. Conrad, *Die Grabstelen aus Moesia Inferior* (Leipzig 2004) pp.76–77.

<sup>46</sup> E. Pfuhl and H. Möbius, *Die ostgriechischen Grabreliefs* (Mainz am Rhein 1979) vol. 2: no. 1296, Bilecik; no.1399, Istanbul, 2<sup>nd</sup> c.; no.1412, Byzantium, 3<sup>rd</sup> c., without inscription; no.1403, Tomi, 3<sup>rd</sup> c. for a son; no.1415, Dubrotic, second half of 2<sup>nd</sup> c., a young rider, with dog, described as νέος ἥρως in Greek (= S. Conrad, *Die Grabstelen aus Moesia Inferior* (Leipzig 2004) p.213, no.323/ Taf. 49, 2); no.1416, Odessos, 2<sup>nd</sup> c.; no.1418, Odessos, 2<sup>nd</sup> c., *hero*, 18 years.

<sup>47</sup> *CIL* VI 9484; L. Bivona, *Iscrizioni latine lapidarie del Museo di Palermo* (Palermo 1970) p.249, no.333, with Tav. CLX.

<sup>48</sup> Ashmolean AN 1960.761 = *CIL* X 3116.

<sup>49</sup> F. M. Avellino, Scavi recenti nella necropoli di Cuma, in Pozzuoli e presso Baja, *Bullettino Archeologico Napoletano* vol. 2 (1843–1844) [1844] p.23.

<sup>50</sup> *IRNL* 3438; *CIL* X 3116.

<sup>51</sup> EDR145344 [last updated 04/12/14, G. Camodeca] [accessed 21/12/15]: *D(is) M(anibus) / Viriae Corneliae / [---]+iare-siae Adaugen/dae, castae, pudicae / domine(:dominae), coniugi / incomparabili(:incomparabili) ADFI/[---]ius Virius Fortuna/tus b(ene) m(erenti) f(ecit).*



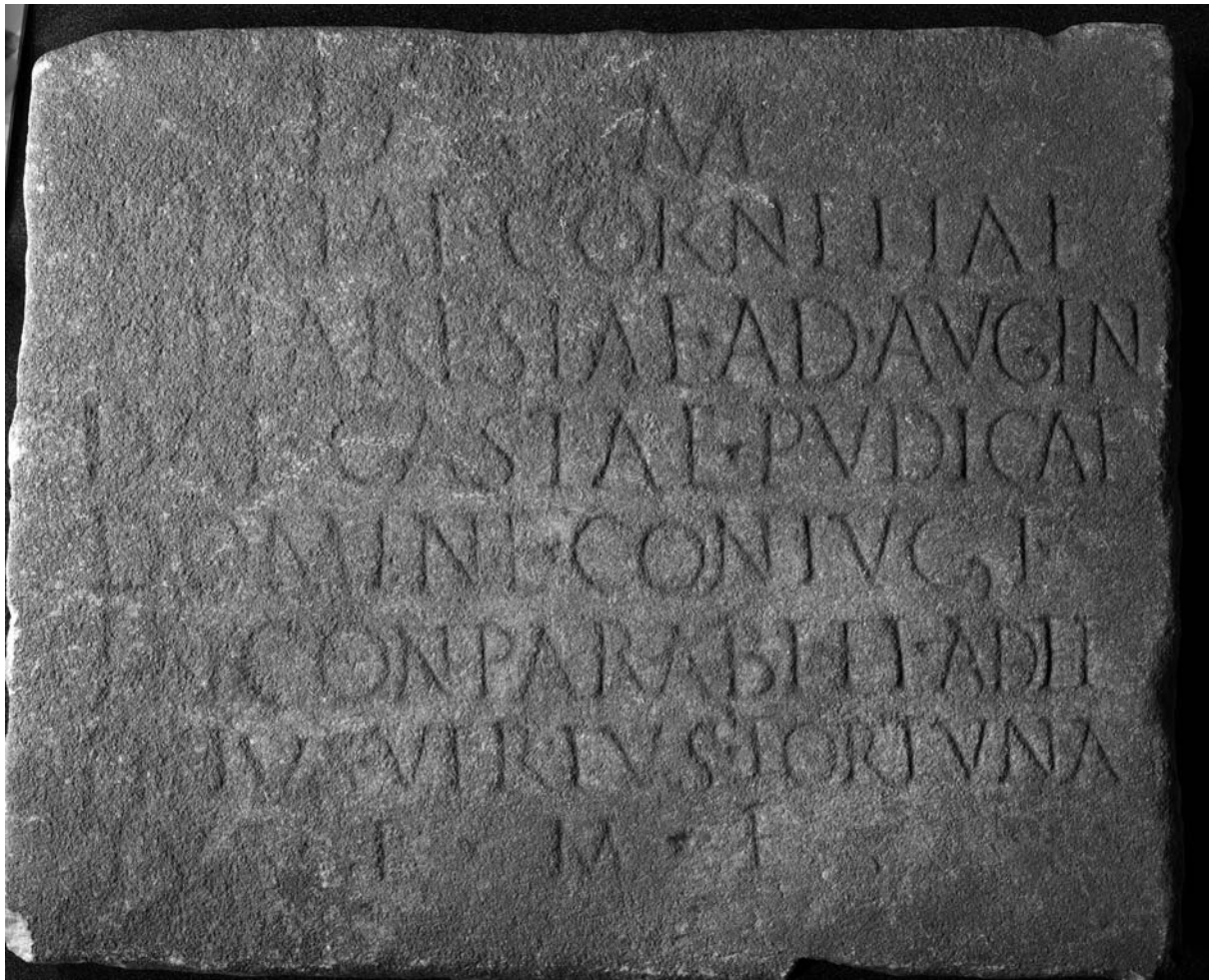


Fig. 14. AshLI 150 = Ashmolean AN 1960.761 [photograph AshLI]

name [P]HARESIAE is visible with RTI, in place of ..IIARESIAE in Avellino and Mommsen. Although the first letter of line 3 is worn away, the female name *Pharesia* is likely.<sup>52</sup> This seems to be followed by a further name, *Adaugendae*,<sup>53</sup> with an extra interpunct inserted in error. This results in the deceased having a polyonymous name consisting of two *nomina gentilia* along with two *cognomina*. The following words include the husband's praise of his deceased wife, suggesting that we should read the phrase *coniugi incomparabili adfectus*, on analogy with similar expressions in other epitaphs from Rome and North Africa.<sup>54</sup> In line 7: the cross-bar on T in TVS is worn away, which led to the reading ..IVS VIRIVS in Avellino and Mommsen.

*d(is) m(anibus) / Vibiae Corneliae / [P]harsiae Adaugen/dae castae pudicae /<sup>s</sup> domin<a>e  
coniugi / incomparabili adfe/[c]tus Virius Fortunatus b(ene) m(erenti) f(ecit)*

'To the departed spirits. Virius Fortunatus set this up for his well-deserving Vibia Cornelia Pharesia Adaugenda, chaste, modest mistress, wife without compare for her devotion.'

<sup>52</sup> Compare *CIL* VI 27203.

<sup>53</sup> Compare *CIL* VI 33785.

<sup>54</sup> Compare *coniugi incomparabilis adfectus*, *AE* 1982 no.83; *incomparabilis adfectus feminae*, *CIL* VIII 4046; *incomparabilis adfectus coniugis*, *CIL* VIII 4180; *rarae adque] castissimae mulieri incomparabilis adfectus coniugi*, *CIL* VIII 10659.

Rediscovered inscriptions

The following inscriptions which are believed lost in various epigraphic corpora have now been relocated in the Ashmolean:

- AshLI 127 = Ashmolean AN C3-128 = *CIL* VI 23957: epitaph of Persania Grapte, currently in a storeroom
- AshLI 147 = Ashmolean AN 1960.758 = *CIL* II 1788b = González, *IRPCadiz* 184b (1982): epitaph of Cercia Pnoe, Gades / Cádiz, Baetica, currently in a storeroom
- AshLI 148 = Ashmolean AN 1960.759 = *CIL* II 1727 = González, *IRPCadiz* 123: epitaph for a magistrate, Gades / Cádiz, Baetica, currently in a storeroom
- AshLI 149 = Ashmolean AN 1960.760 = *CIL* II 1735 = González, *IRPCadiz* 131: public honours for a deceased person, Gades / Cádiz, Baetica, currently in a storeroom
- AshLI 160 = Ashmolean AN 2007.50 = *ICUR* I 3423: Christian burial of Decentius, Rome
- AshLI 166 = Ashmolean AN 2008.46 = *CIL* V 742: altar to Belenus, Aquileia.

Alison Cooley, Warwick  
a.cooley@warwick.ac.uk